

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 7935

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: SHUM PINT UK AR

SUBJECT: CONGRESSMAN DRINAN'S VISIT TO ARGENTINA: GOA SECURITY
FORCES SURVEILLANCE OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION

REF: BA 7512

1. BOTH AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL (AI) GROUP AND BRITISH AND AMERICAN EMBASSY ESCORT OFFICERS WERE AWARE OF INTENSIVE GOA ESCORT - SURVEILLANCE EFFORT DURING VISIT NOV 6-15 OF AI DELEGATION, OF WHICH CONG. DRINAN WAS MEMBEER, ASPECTS OF THIS WERE REPORTED TO ADDRESSEES DURING VISIT.

2. WE HAVE COPY OF A CLANDESTINE NEWSLETTER, WHICH HAS BEEN CIRCULATING IN BUENOS AIRES FOR SOME WEEKS, WHICH PURPORTS TO DRAW UPON SOURCES WITHIN THE FEDERAL POLICE FOR ITS DETAILED REPORT OF THE SURVEILLANCE. NEWSLETTER IS POOR QUALITY FLYSHEET ATTRIBUTED TO "AGENCIA DE NOTICIAS CLANDESTINA - ANCLA" (CLANDESTINE NEWS AGENCY), WHICH IS MAILED TO EMBASSIES, NEWS AGENCIES, NEWSPAPERS, ETC. WHILE NEWSLETTER HAS NOT YET IDENTIFIED ITS PUBLISHERS, IT IS WIDELY ASSUMED THAT IT IS ISSUED BY ONE OF THE LEFTIST EXTREMIST GUERRILLA ORGANIZATIONS, PROBABLY THE MONTONEROS. ITS CONTENT VARIES FROM GENERAL POLITICAL COMMENTARY TO DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF ALLEGED SECURITY FORCES ABUSES. WHILE WE CANNOT YET JUDGE ITS DEGREE OF ACCURACY AND "HONESTY," THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN RECENT ISSUE NO. 126 DATED NOV. 25 CONCERNING AI VISIT COULD ONLY HAVE COME FROM SOURCES WITHIN THE SECURITY FORCES OR FROM VERY CLOSE SURVEILLANCE OF THE VISIT BY THE EXTREMEISTS THEMSELVES, THE LATTER UNLIKELY IN
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VIEW OF THE SWARMS OF POLICE AROUND THE AI GROUP.

3. ANCLA CLAIMS THAT FEDERAL POLICE MOUNTED ONE OF LARGEST INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS ON RECORD DURING AI VISIT, WHICH POLICE ENTITLED "OPERATIONS CHRISTMAN". ACCORDING TO ANCLA, THE GROUP'S HOTEL ROOMS WERE MONITORED FOR SOUND, TELEPHONES TAPPED, AND ROOMS ENTERED BY POLICE IN ABSENCE OF VISITORS TO SEARCH BELONGINGS AND PHOTOGRAPH DOCUMENTS. EACH WAS FOLLOWED ON EXCURSIONS FROM HOTEL, AND ALL ACTIVITIES AND CONTACTS NOTED. NEWSLETTER RECORDS REPORT OF SURVEILLANCE OF MS. FEENEY DURING VISIT TO RESTAURANT WHERE SHE MET CONTACT, ETC. ANCLAS ALSO RECORDS ALLEGED POLICE REPORTS OF ADDRESSES OF HOUSES VISITED BY AI MEMBERS, VARIOUS OF THEIR MOVEMENTS, VISITS TO PRESS, ETC. SAMPLE OF POLICE RADIO DIALOGUE IS REPORTED, WHICH COULD HAVE COME FROM POLICE DOCUMENTS OR FROM MONITORING. ACCURACY IS INDICATED BY STATEMENT THAT DRINAN AND FEENEY VISITED CERTAIN STREET ADDRESS IN SUBURBS; NUMBER GIVEN IS THAT OF GARAGE ENTRANCE OF EMBOFF'S HOME WHERE DRINAN AND FEENEY WERE GUEST FOR SUNDAY AFTERNOON LUNCH. EMBOFF WAS NOT RPT NOT NAMED, HOWEVER, NOR WAS ADDRESS OTHERWISE IDENTIFIED. ANCLA NOTED PRESENCE IN AREA OF 'DODGE 1500 WITH DIPLOMATIC PLATES...BEING USED BY NAVAL INTELLIGENCE FOR SURVEILLANCE.' AUTO WAS PRESENT, BUT IT WAS SECURITY VEHICLE OF THIS EMBASSY OCCUPIED BY CONTRACT GUARDS. VERY HEAVY AND VERY OBVIOUS POLICE PROTECTION/SURVEILLANCE WAS OBSERVED AT TIME BY EMBOFFS, AND PICTURES WERE TAKEN BY TELEPHOTO LENS OF DRINAN AND FEENEY ENTERING AND LEAVING HOME.

4. COMMENT: AI VISITORS WERE WELL AWARE OF POLICE PROTECTION - SURVEILLANCE AT TIME, AND ONE POINT MS. FEENEY REMARKED WITH PRIDE ON EVASION MANEUVER SHE HAD USED TO COMPLICATE JOB OF POLICE AGENTS FOLLOWING HER. HOWEVER, THEY CONTINUED TO MEET BOTH "OPEN" CONTACTS SUCH AS NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND DIPLOMATS, AND "PRIVATE" CONTACTS SUCH AS HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINANTS, IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH INVITED THE MOST CASUAL OBSERVATION AND POSSIBLE POLICE RETALIATION(E.E. INTERVIEW AND SUPPLYING OF MONEY TO JOSEFA MARTINEZ IN HOTEL LOBBY IN CORDOBA).

5. WHILE WE CANNOT BE CERTAIN THAT THE CHARGES OF TELEPHONE TAPPING, SOUND MONITORING AND ENTERING OF ROOMS ARE TRUE, WE AND BRITISH EMBASSY CONSIDER SUCH ACTIONS ON THE PART OF THE POLICE TO HAVE BEEN HIGHLY LIKELY. BLATENT SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITY
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AS DISTINCT FROM PROTECTION APPEARS TO CONTRADICT APPARENT INTENTION OF GOA TO LET AI VISIT AND TAKE AWAY BEST POSSIBLE IMPRESSION, BUT IT REFLECTS CONTRADICTIONS PREVIOUSLY NOTED IN OTHER GOA TREATMENT OF VISIT. WHILE FON MINISTRY AND SOME PARTS OF MIN INTERIOR MADE WHAT SEEMED TO BE SINCERE EFFORTS TO COOPERATE, PROVIDE INFORMATION AND LEAVE GOOD IMPRESSION, OFFICIAL NEWS AGENCY TELAM LED SMEAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST AI IN GENERAL AND VISITORS IN PARTICULAR. POLICE EVIDENTLY TOOK OPPORTUNITY

TO MONITOR VISITORS BOTH TO ESTABLISH WITH WHOM THEY TALKED AND WHAT ABOUT, AND PROBABLY TO INTIMIDATE SOME OF THOSE WHO MIGHT HAVE WANTED TO APPROACH THE AI GROUP, NOT CARING WHETHER OR NOT SUCH ACTIVITY MIGHT PREJUDICE AI VISITORS.

6. ANCLA NEWLETTER IS AVAILABLE TO NEWS AGENCIES, ETC., AND THIS INFORMATION MAY BE REPORTED TO PRESS ABROAD. WE SEE NO APPARENT OBJECTION TO INFORMALLY BRIEFING DRINAN ON ANCLA REPORT, BUT LEAVE DECISION TO DISCRETION DEPT. WE UNDERSTAND BRITISH EMBASSY HAS SENT SIMILAR REPORT TO LONDON.
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